(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise in view of (b) above.

Village public telephones

1413. SHRI BHAGIRATHI MAJHI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is adopting any procedure for installing the Village Public Telephones (VPTs) in villages under the Bharat Nirman Programme;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the total number of villages where telephone connections have installed in the State of Orissa so far under this scheme, the details, district-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) and (b) Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) entered into an agreement with Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) in November, 2004 for provision of Village Public Telephones (VPTs) in 66,822 unconnected villages in the country progressively by June, 2008. This excludes villages having population less than 100, those lying in thick forest areas and those affected by insurgencies.

(c) As on 31.12.2007, 1,227 villages in the State of Orissa have been provided with VPTs by BSNL. A statement indicating District-wise number of villages provided with VPT facility has been given in the Statement.

Statement

Status of District-wise number of villages provided with VPT facility as on 31.12.2007

Sl. No.	Name of the District	Total number of new VPTs installed
1.	Balasore	4
2.	Baripada	41
3.	Berhampur	47
4.	Bhubneswar (Puri)	249
5.	Bolangir	61
6.	Cuttack	7
7.	Dhenkanal-Keonjhar	68
8.	Kalahandi (Bhawanipatna)	78
9.	Koraput	402
10.	Phulbani	103
11.	Sambalpur	89
12.	Sundergarh (Rourkela)	78
	TOTAL:	1227